Demetrius *and the Crafts-men:*

A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

Berkshire Assizes

HELD IN

ABINGDON

August the *7th.* 1683.

By *William Baron* Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty, and Rector of *Hampstead-Marshal* & *Enborne* in the County of *Berks.*

LONDON,

Printed for *William Cademan* at the *Popes-head* in the *New-Exchange* in the *Strand,* MDCLXXXIII.

(8), 19 c

To the Right Worſhipful

JOHN WHITWICK Eſq;

High-Seriff of BERKS.

With all the Loyal *Addreſſors* at the laſt Aſſizes, whether of the *Grand-Jury*, or other *Deputy-Leivtenants*, *Juſtices of the Peace*, &c.

Gentlemen,

I *Muſt beg your juſtification of this pedant and* Common-place *Apology, wherewith I am oblig'd to Preface my ſelf to the* Reader, viz. *that you not only earneſtly requeſted, but even forc'd a promiſe from me of putting this diſcourſe in Print, which I mention not ſo much in acknowledgment of that undeſerved reſpect you were pleas'd to ſhew me, (although I ſhould be the worſt of men not to own ſo great an obligation) nor to beg your protection againſt the malice and calumnies of the many inveterate Factions, (for I know 'tis more than you can do for your ſelves.) But to declare the averſion I have ever*

had to appear in this kind, with the loſs of that freedom I have formerly taken in cenſuring other mens too great forwardneſs herein? for I ever commiſerated the poor burthen'd Preſs, and amongſt Friends, frequently reflected upon our many ſelf-admiring Authors, with thoſe little tricks and artifices, which of my knowledge are uſed to get abroad by publick order, or eſpecial command; Beſides, as I was engag'd to ſerve Mr. High-Sheriff in this way of my profeſſion (as you Sir can teſtify) before this laſt Hellish Conſpiracy *was diſcover'd, ſo would I not be thought to have the more freely expreſs'd my ſelf upon the Diſcovery, for I bleſs God, I never believ'd better of the Party, than they have now approv'd themſelves, and therefore left to my own choice, ſhould think it too late to expreſs my reſentments, when by the infinite mercy of Heaven they are as deſpicable as they were ſometimes dangerous: But ſince I am thus put upon unboſoming my thoughts, give me leave further to declare a ſuſpicion, that our* prudential Politicians *with their* Trimming Moderation (*who now indeed cry* peccavi *with a* non putaram, *truly, I could not have thought that any* Engliſh *Spirit had been of ſuch a temper*) *are* Hypocrites *rather than* Fools, *and I am ſtill afraid that many who now kiſs the hand, wiſh'd well to the enterpriſe in their hearts, and deſpair not*

of

of a better opportunity to cut the throat, whilſt that malicious monkiſh wit upon the great Eraſmus *hanging between Heaven and Hell, may be apply'd to many of our* Wiſe Diſcreet Men, *who take care to keep themſelves equally pois'd between* Monarchy *and* Commonwealth; *Had the Deſign indeed newly drop'd out of the Clouds, from the Prince of the Air, or been ſome antiquated project of* Machiavel *or* Borgia, *a ſober well meaning intention might have been impos'd upon by thoſe many fair Gloſſes which are never wanting upon ſuch occaſions, but when 'tis one continued Scene of villany carry'd on for Forty (I may ſay for Fourſcore) years together, and now begun to be acted over again by many of the ſame perſons, all upon the ſame principles; nay, ſo dull is their invention, by the ſame method too, by the ſame improbable Stories, falſe ſuggeſtions, and moſt ſcandalous reproaches upon all men that ſtand up for Peace and Truth, Religion or Loyalty; How can any man of ſence debauch his Reaſon or Charity ſo far, as to believe that ſuch Vipers have all on a ſuddain loſt their Stings, or that they will not naturally produce a Generation of the ſame kind? eſpecially when we find them equally impenitent for the miſchiefs they have formerly done, and partial in their preſent Judgment and repreſentation of things; Thus the*

5th.

5th. *of* November *was a* Helliſh Bloody Plot, *but the* 30th. *of* January's *Parricide muſt not be call'd to remembrance; the Court muſt be arraign'd of* Arbitrary Deſigns, *but not one ſingle Member ſuſpected of* Commonwealthiſm; *and therefore whilſt our* Demagogues *were in being to defend the eſtabliſh'd Church was nothing leſs than* Popery; *and to compare* Eighty *with* Forty One, *the direct way into* T——ms *Inquiſition, as if no man living could remember the Arbitrary arrogance of a* Republican Junto *with our twenty years Captivity under a Rebel* Sword: *or to ſpeak of our Religious concerns, as if* Ignatius Loyola *and* John Calvin *had not both ſet up about the ſame time, or our poor Church and Nation ſuffer'd as much from the* Presbyterians *as* Jeſuits.

But in this Gentlemen, as well as in the following diſcourſe, I preſent you with nothing but your own thoughts, which as they are much better expreſs'd in your Loyal Addreſs *to His Majeſty, ſo do you ſtill more effectually declare them in a continued ſteady vigour for His* Service *and Preſervation. And as there is one* Great GoodMan *to whoſe Bounty and Favour, I muſt, (under God) ſolely attribute whatever relates to my well being in this life, ſo I eſteem*

E. of Craven.

it

it no mean part of my happineſs that He and Providence hath fix'd me amongſt a company of worthy Perſons, who will ſet a value upon a man, though he hath nothing more to recommend him than an unfeigned Zeal for the Church *and* State, King *and* Government, *but ſo good a Principle will buoy up any ordinary parts, and alone enable its votaries to laugh at, and defie, the froppiſhneſs and falſhood of a* gain-ſaying diſobedient People, *whom I ſhould not deſpair ſhortly to ſee of another temper; had you Gentlemen the ſame influence upon our little* CommonwealthCorporations, *as you have upon the out-lying Factions: But ſince it is the will of Heaven that theſe* Canaanites *ſhould be continued in the Land, doubtleſs it will now on all hands be thought requiſite to have ſuch an eye upon them, that it may not be in their power to quench the light of our* Iſrael, *or diſturb the Peace of* Sion.

And if by this means we can at laſt be throughly awakened into a ſence of danger, it will be ſuch light out of darkneſs, ſuch an unexpected good from ſo Helliſh an intended Evil, as thoſe malevolent Spirits whom the diſappointments cannot convert, the envy muſt neceſſarily confound, whilſt our repeated deliverances having wearied the malice of their attempts,

attempts, we may by Gods bleſſing, arrive in the end at that happy ſettlement, which you, and all good men endeavour, and that your endeavours may fully take effect, (amongſt many thouſand others, more worthy to prevail) ſhall never want the inceſſant Prayers of

Honoured Sirs,

Your moſt Unfeigned
Faithful Servant

WILL. BARON.

Acts 19. 38.

Wherefore if Demetrius *and the Crafts-men which are with him, have a matter againſt any man, the Law is open, and there are Deputies, let them implead one another.*

THere is ſuch a mutual correſpondence between our publick and private wel-fare, every mans perticular intereſt ſo unavoidably depends upon the common good, that our firſt thoughts may probably ſuggeſt, that Univerſal principle of Self-Preſervation ſhould equally concern us for both: But upon more exact conſideration, we ſhall find Man in his ſingle capacity is center'd only upon himſelf without any different Parties, any contrary Votes to Retard or Oppoſe him; and will naturally make that the ultimate end of all his undertakings, whatever other obligations may lie upon him from the dictates of right reaſon, or the compacts of humane ſociety engage him unto: whereas the Body Politick is ſo artificial a piece, made up of ſo many different Tempers and Conſtitutions, Humours, Intereſts, and Deſigns, that, like other curious Compoſitions, every unhappy jog, every rough hand, or foul breath, is liable to diſorder, if not quite deſtroy it. And next to the all-diſpoſing Providence of Heaven, I cannot aſſign any other cauſe but this, of thoſe many Revolutions which have ſo frequently happened in the World, that the whole Earth ſhould ever

ſince the Creation, have been as it were an *Akeldama*; and the *Hiſtories* of all Ages, and Places too, contain little elſe than ſo many Records of Blood and Slaughter, Deſolation and Ruines: whilſt Goverment becomes more mortal than the Members whereof it conſiſts; not an Age doth paſs without many ſignal Revolutions, and fatal Cataſtrophes. Nay, that the ſame Miſchiefs do not happen every day, is not for want of evil Spirits to foment and raiſe them up; but from the prudent management of ſome more Peaceable diſpoſitions, who by the aſſiſtance of that Divine Power *which ſtilleth the raging of the Seas*, are ſometimes able to quell *the noiſe of*
Pſal. 65 7. *theſe Seditious Waves, and Madneſs of ſuch People.*

A remarkable inſtance of this kind, we have in the whole precedent paſſage unto which my Text relates, where a few *Factious Mechanicks*, under pretence of *decay of Trade, and Innovation in Religion*, had put the whole City of *Epeſus* into an uproar; and ſo far engaged the Rabble to their Party, that St. *Paul* (could they have found him) and all others whom they had a pique againſt, muſt be expoſed to wild Beaſts, juſt as Bloody and Mercileſs as themſelves. Thus for ſome hours the hubbub continued, and though *few of them knew why they were come together*, yet ſtill great was *Dia-*
ver. 32. *na of the* Epheſians, *Religion* and *Property* their only clamour. But as their Throats grew hoarſe, their Paſſions began to cool, and ſo gave way for this diſcourſe of the Town-Clerk, as we tranſlate it; but he was indeed the γραμματεὺς the Regiſter who Recorded the Names of all ſuch as gain'd any prizes in the ſeveral Games at this ſolemn Feſtival of their ſo much admir'd Deity; by reaſon of which Office he had the greater influence upon them, and might the more freely expoſtulate about the Illegality of their proceedings: Having therefore harangu'd

rang'd them with the acknowledg'd greatneſs of that *Diana*, they were ſo Zealous for *ver.* 35. and given a touch at the raſhneſs of this Tumultuous Aſſembly, for which in all probability they would be called in queſtion, *ver.* 36. He declares in the 37*th* the inoffenſive deportment of thoſe perſons they clamour'd ſo much againſt: Nevertheleſs if they thought themſelves agriev'd, He tells them in my Text of a more regular courſe which they ought to have taken, and according to which, if the action will bear it, they may ſtill proceed. *Wherefore if* Demetrius, *&c.*

The words then ſeem to be an Abridgement of the whole precedent diſturbance, wherein with very little aſſiſtance from the context, we may conſider theſe five ſeveral parts, or obſervable paſſages.

1. Firſt, here are the Parties concern'd, their Quality and Profeſſion, Demetrius *and the Craftſmen*, &c.

2. Secondly, here is an action ſuppos'd, a complaint or grievance pretended, for ſo the word λόγος doth ſome times ſignifie an Action, Proceſs, or Indictment; and then πρός τινα λόγον ἔχειν denotes a matter of accuſation.

3. Thirdly, Here is their way of redreſs tacitely reflected upon both as unjuſt and dangerous.

4. Fourthly, Here is the regular courſe they ought to have taken, *let them implead one another.*

5. Fifthly, Here are all pretences cut off for their not proceeding according to this regular courſe, in that firſt there was no denial of Juſtice, *the Law was open*, nor ſecondly was there any delay of Juſtice, *there are Deputies.*

Of which ſeveral parts, together with ſome few Inferences by way of Application, with as much brevity as you can expect, or your many other weighty Affairs require.

1. Firſt, Here are the Parties concern'd, their Quality, and Profeſſion, Demetrius *and the Craftſmen*; what theſe *Shrines* were which caus'd all this ſtir, 'would be too tedious a digreſſion critically to relate: In general, 'tis concluded they were little Cabinets or Chaplets of Silver, with the Image of *Diana* in them; which every man was at liberty to purchace for the uſe of his private Superſtition, Devotion I cannot call it; ſo that the buſineſs of theſe Artificers was much like that of the *Agnus Dei*, and other ſuch like Trinket-makers in the Church of *Rome*; had therefore St. *Pauls* Doctrine been agreeable to that of St. *Peters* prerended Succeſſor now there, in all probability theſe *Craftſmen* would have been as Zealous for the change, as they were violent againſt any alteratiou, ſince for every *Shrine*, they might have been imploy'd to make ten times as many *Saints*. But our Apoſtles Commiſſion was quite otherwiſe, to call upon, *and exhort all men every where to repent*, and particularly to *turn from thoſe dumb Idols unto the living God*; And this the Devil knew very well, which made him take occaſion from theſe mens avarice, to ſuppreſs (if poſſible) the further progreſs of thoſe glorious Truths, which would totally ſubvert his Kingdom of Darkneſs, and ſome probability there was of an expected ſucceſs; for when that evil Spirit enters into a multitude, *its name is Legion* to purpoſe, when *Faction* comes once to be *incorporated*, and the ſeveral male-contents dare to enter into *Aſſociations*; when every rude *Mechanick* will preſume to cenſure Affairs of State, and admire none but

Acts 17. 30. 1 Cor. 12. 2.

but a ſmooth Tongu'd *Demetrius*, who will be ſure to repreſent things at the greateſt diſadvantage: Let the *Cedars* of *Lebanon* look to it, or theſe *Brambles* will burn them down; all things, both Sacred and Civil, will ſoon be trampled under foot by their Rage and Fury.

2. Secondly, We are to conſider the matter of complaint, the pretended grievance, or accuſation, which is here ſuppos'd by the *Town-Clerk*; but fully enlarg'd upon in *Demetrius*'s Seditious Rethorick at the 27*th. Verſe*, *By St.* Pauls *Preaching that they be no Gods which are made with hands, not only their Craft was in danger to be ſet at nought, but their Temple and great Godeſs deſpis'd*; The Schools tell us of a *cauſa latens* and *cauſa patens*, one thing pretended, when another occaſioned the pretence; and here we find a doubie Inducement urg'd by our Appron'd Orator, *Great was* Diana, *but greater were her* Shrines. Religion might have ſome influence, but Intereſt much more; had they not by this Craft got their wealth, ſo cold would have been their Zeal, that her Altars might have frozen. *Innovations in Religion*, were indeed by the *Gentiles* themſelves, look'd upon as dangerous, and the great *Auguſtus* his Favorite told him, *There were no perſons he ought to be ſo ſevere upon, as they that introduc'd a Worſhip contrary to the eſtabliſh'd Laws*; which was the reaſon doubtleſs, that Chriſtianity met with ſo much oppoſition, and notwithſtanding its manifold ſuperlative excellencies, was ſo long before the Civil Power gave it countenance: but whatſoever is done, either upon this, or any other account, ſuppoſeth a due procedure, a regular courſe of Juſtice, without committing ſo Sacred a matter to the Arbitrage of the Rabble, the *Pious Whimſies*, not to ſay *Religious Cheats*, of ſelf

deſigning

designing men; yet, make the Observatton where you please, even amongst the demurest Professors of our most holy Religion, and all pretences of this kind will be found no better, when it comes once under a popular Reformation, 'tis made a stalking-horse to the vilest enterprizes, where every man wears the *Pharisees* Vizzard, proportions his Devotion to the Intreague he has on foot: So far as it answers their Ambition, satisfies their Avarice, gratifies their Revenge, promotes a Party, or carries on a Design, with *Jehu* none shall be more ready to express their Zeal, altho' in so preposterous a mannar, as half an eye may discover, they that bawl lowdest on its behalf, resolve to stifle it in the noise; Fight for its defence till 'tis smothered in the Blood they spill. Thus I say it has been always found, but more especially of late; he that is of a *Godly Party*, shall in spight of the deepest guilt, *be a Godly man*, so meritorious a thing with some it is to be *Factious*, that it assumes the place of *Charity, and covers a multitude of Sins*; in the mean while, can we imagine any thing should more highly provoke the Majesty of Heaven, then to see such Pearls trodden under-foot by Swine, that Prayer, which was design'd to open the Gates of Heaven, should *devour Widows Houses*, and all other his most Sacred Ordinances, instead of purchasing an Eternal Inheritance, be prostituted to the Lusts, the Humours, and Interests of *Hypocrites*, *Atheists*, and such like unreasonable men?

3. Thirdly, We are to consider their manner of redress, which is here tacitly reflected upon, both as unjust, and daugerous. 1*st*. Unjust, That they who were a Party, should presume to Judge, give Sentence, and be Executioners too themselves; an Infallible sign of a bad Cause, and worse intention, by not appealing to the Law

for

for right, it was abundantly evident they design'd others no little wrong. But then 2*dly.* this way of proceeding was not more unjuſt, than dangerous; for ſo it is declared at the 40 *verſe*, *We are in danger to be call'd in queſtion for this days uproar*, the *Romans* were a Wiſe and Generous, but withall a Jealous Nation, as they indulg'd their conqueſts with more liberty than could be many times expected; ſo when it appear'd that people would not be contain'd within thoſe juſt and reaſonable bounds they knew well enough how to take up the Rains, to tame the exorbitancy of ſuch unmanageable ſpirits. And indeed not only they, but any other Civilis'd Nation muſt look upon ſuch proceedings as of dangerous conſequence, to ſtrike at the very Foundation of Goverment, and as far as in them lies, bring all things back to a ſtate of Nature, or rather a *Chaos* of confuſion. Yet this principle, ſo generally exploded by all ſober Heathens, we have found not only put in practice, but alſo juſtifi'd, by ſome *Chriſtian Libertines* of our preſent Age, who will aſſume to themſelves a power of controlling any Goverment, either in *Church*, or *State*, upon a two-fold account, the one Temporal, the other Spiritual; The Right of the People, and the Juriſdiction of Conſcience; two worthy Topicks, as impertinent; and falſe, as they are popular; But becauſe of their Popularity, it will be requiſite to take notice of their impertinency. And,

1. Firſt, *For the Right of the People*, it is a meer Chymæra, without exiſtence either in Reaſon or Policy, any further than 'tis included in thoſe Laws and Conſtitutions which are accomodated to the welfare of the whole; for when a Goverment is once fix'd, and the many advantages thereby accrewing, evidently appear; 'tis non-ſenſe to think any one ſingle, or ſuppoſed inconvenience

nience ſhould un-hinge all again; for as *Grotius* very well applies that of the *Comedian*, *Aut hæc cum illis ſunt habenda, aut illa cum his mittenda ſunt*, there is nothing perfect in this life, and more eſpecially in this caſe, they that pretend to make things better, have conſtantly alter'd them much for the worſe; whilſt this very cheat of aſſerting the Peoples right, hath been often experienc'd the moſt compendious way to make them Slaves; and the deluded *Aſſes* found themſelves in the end, hardeſt ridden by theſe new Maſters which flatter'd them with the beſt uſage, and greateſt Freedom.

De Ju Bel. & Pa.

Thus the Judicious Hiſtorian obſerv'd, *Ut imperium evertant, libertatem proferunt ſi perverterint, libertatem ipſam aggredientur.* What diſmal convulſions of ſtate happen'd in the *Roman Commonwealth*, when the people were ingag'd in the ſeveral *Factions* of the great ones; and how was there more Bloud ſpilt in thoſe unnatural Quarrels, than in the Conqueſt of the whole known World. And how much Treaſure, Strength, and Freedom have not we loſt ſince, by the like Seditious infatuations, and are not yet ſecure from putting on the ſame or a heavier Yoke, for as in great Tempeſts, the Sea doth not preſently calm, though the wind be down which raiſed the Storm: So thoſe Debaucheries upon the Spirits of men, thoſe unquiet and Factious Principles which our late times of *Anarchy* and Confuſion introduc'd, are ſtill upon the Fret, and were very lately bidding fair for ſo much popular breath as might raiſe a ſecond Storm. And till I can find one inſtance wherein the Peoples Right hath not been thus made uſe of, to betray both them and the Government at once, I muſt crave leave to rank all ſuch pretended Patriots amongſt that race of men whom *Solomon* forbids us *to meddle with, becauſe ſo much given to change.* But granting this, that

Tacit Ann. lib. 4.

Prov. 24. 21.

that the Body, the *outward man* (as they term it) may be reſtrain'd by the power of Laws, and prudence of Magiſtrates; yet ſtill the Soul ought to be free, Conſcience muſt have no reſtraint, which is our *Chriſtian Libertines.*

2. Second Plea, the *Juriſdiction of Conſcience:* We find here at the 31*ſt. verſe*, amongſt this Rabble of *Ryoters*, ſome cry'd one thing, ſome another, (for the Aſſembly was confus'd) without knowing wherefore they came together, or what they would be at; and juſt ſuch a Stale is *Conſcience* made to all the humourſom *Capricio's* of *Faction* and *Folly*; every perverſe Will; every private Fancy, and perticular Opinion; every cauſeleſs Scruple, ſlight Perſwaſion, or groundleſs Fear, is cry'd up for the Great *Diana* of Conſcience; and they that dare to contradict or oppoſe it, muſt expect St. *Paul's* Fate here at *Epheſus*, and provide to fight with Beaſts in the ſhape of men. Neither will time permit, nor the ſubject oblige me exactly to ſtate the caſe; and therefore I ſhall only obſerve in general, That Conſcience in Spiritual, in Religious Concerns, is the ſame with Judgment in Temporal Affairs, and conſiſts in a ſound and well grounded apprehenſion of things; which too many perſons having not patience to attend to, or diſcretion to enquire after, take up with every pious whimſey, every ſtrong deluſion, or prejudiciate opinion, and obtrude them upon the world under this ſpecious title of *Conſcience*; whereas, alas! they are but ſo many Diſtempers of the mind, and thoſe dangerous enough; a kind of ſpiritual Spleen, which as it ſeldom kills, ſo is it rarely cur'd but continually renders the parties which it affects uneaſie to themſelves, and all they converſe with. And therefore ſome have not improperly ſtil'd Conſci-

ence, the *Thanaticks Pope*, whilſt the King and Triple Crown are contending for Supremacy; That puts in againſt both, and will be Supream in all Cauſes, Eccleſiaſtical and Civil: But the contrary is evident in that, the ſame God, who we grant erected a Tribunal in every mans breaſt, aud there ſet Conſcience to be Judge; hath erected other Tribunals of Juſtice, to which *Conſcience* it ſelf is ſubjected, *Romans* 13. 5. *Ye muſt needs be ſubject not only for wrath, but for Conſcience ſake*; And if we cannot reconcile our obedience to our Parents, to our Prince, and Governors, with what that dictates we ſin againſt God, whilſt we obey our Conſcience. For the more clear deciding which controverſy, there is a third Tribunal in Heaven, to which all Judges, (Conſcience and all,) muſt give an account one day, where thoſe partial Decrees we have paſs'd here in our own favour will be far from Authentick Records; and when we think our *Conſciences* ſhould anſwer for us, we muſt anſwer for our *Conſciences*, which 'tis to be fear'd (upon Tryal) will prove the greateſt offenders.

4. Fourthly, we conſider'd here the regular courſe they ought to have taken, which is by way of accuſation or Indictment, *Let them implead one another*, τὸν πάντα κόσμον ἐποίησεν ὁ δημιουργὸς οὐ χερσὶν ἀλλὰ λόγῳ ſaith the *Platoniſt*, God made the World not with hands, but by Reaſon, Council, and Order; having from all Eternity, (as the Schools very well conjecture) preſcrib'd himſelf a rule by which he would proceed in the Creation and Goverment of the Univerſe, where every particular Being ſhould have likewiſe a rule fix'd, and be oblig'd to act according to the emanations of his Divine will. Now all Goverments here below, are, or at leaſtwiſe ought to be, ſo many tranſcripts of this original which is

ſet

ſet us from above; neither is it poſſible there ſhould be any Communities of men, or entercourſe of Societies, without a mutual obligation to obſerve ſuch Rules of right and wrong, good and evil, as *natural Conſcience* ſhall dictate, or *humane Reaſon* judge to be expedient; the Wiſdom of all Nations having been meaſured by nothing ſo much as the excellency of their Laws, and prudence of Adminiſtration; where every Member of this great Body is conſidered according to the Circumſtances it lies under, the Office it performs; and ſo far encouraged therein, as to proſecute its Province, its Duty, with induſtry and ſatisfaction: But when we are Partial on the One ſide, or Mutinous on the Other; *When the eye ſhall ſay to the hand, I have no need of thee, or the Feet to the Head, I want not your direction*; as St. *Paul* very elegantly applies it to the Spiritual, ſo would it make ſuch a Schiſm, ſuch a diſorder in any Body politick, as thoſe wholſom preſervatives, thoſe Laws I mean, which were deſign'd for the continuance of its health, are the firſt things thrown out of dores; whilſt ſo many buiſy Empericks will be applying their new preſcriptions, that 'tis ten times worſe than death to fall under ſuch hands; yet that too is certain in the end, although without the leaſt aſſurance of a quiet Grave. That the Ballance therefore may be kept even, Juſtice holds the Scales; all Controverſies of *meum & tuum*, right and wrong, are to be determin'd by perſons, not only unconcern'd in the Affair, but of Parts, of Abilities, both Intellectual and Moral, anſwerable to ſo great a Truſt; a clear underſtanding, with an unbias'd integrity. Thus the great Orator at *Athens* προεστάναι ἐν τοῖς νόμοι, εἶναι τούτων ἑκάστου τὴν δίκην, μὴ τῇ τοῦ προσοχόντος ὁρμῇ μηδὲ βουλήσει ταῦτα κρινέσθαι, the Plaintiff is to ſeek for redreſs from the Laws, not his own

1 Cor. 12.

Demoſth. in Core.

 Paſſions

Paſſions, or Power; which, as it is one of the firſt Articles agreed upon in all humane Polity; ſo, duly obſerv'd, neither God nor *Cæſar*, Prince nor People, could be impos'd upon. If therefore *Demetrius* and his *Faction*, or any other ſuch *froward diſpoſitions*, will ſtand out againſt that which is the Univerſal ſecurity of all mankind, 'tis but fit they ſhould quit civil converſe, and voluntarily betake themſelves to *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fate, although (without doubt) many Beaſts there are which care not for ſuch tempers herding amongſt them, eſpecial if we conſider,

5. The fifth and laſt Obſervable from the Text, where all pretences are cut off for their not proceeding according to this regular courſe; in that, 1*ſt.* there was no denial of Juſtice, *the Law* was open; neither, 2*dly.* was there any delay of Juſtice, *there were Deputies* ready.

1. Firſt, there was no denial of Juſtice, *the Law was open*; as neceſſity is many times alledg'd without any juſt cauſe, ſo when there is juſt cauſe indeed, all other obligations ceaſe: To be ſure it could not take place here, for *the Law was open*; that is, 1. free and eaſie to all parties, and all conditions, every one might have acceſs to the Courts of Judicature, and expect redreſs according as the matter impleaded ſhould require; or, 2*dly.* *the Law was open*; that is, clear and plain,

——————Haud ambagibus
Implicita, ſed quæ, regulisæqui & boni
Suffulta, rudibus pariter & doctis patent.

without

without thoſe obſcure ambiguities, and ſubtle niceties, which make even the Laws themſelves a ſnare, advance the intereſt of a profeſſion to the more certain ruine of the injur'd Party, whilſt the whole current of Juſtice is perverted by the crafty evaſions and endleſs cavils of covetous and contentious Spirits. It is a ſevere reflection which *Livy* makes upon the Age he liv'd in, in compariſon with the primitive ſimplicity of their ſo-much-renowned *Commonwealth*; *Nondum hæc negligentia Deum verebat, nec interpretando ſibi quiſq; jus jurandum & leges aptas ſpiebat, ſed ſuos potius mores ad ea accommodabat*: When men had a true ſenſe of a Deity, and regarded the ſolemnity of an Oath, they would not forſwear themſelves out of any partial reſpect either to Friend or Intereſt; neither was it look'd upon as an uſeful ſtudy to find out flaws in an Act of State, or gratifie the Luſts and Humours of men in oppoſition to the expreſs letter of the Law, as well as intention of the Legiſlator. But however ſuch corruptions as theſe might have crept into other places, it ſeems they had not yet reach'd *Epheſus*, *the Law was open* there; Juſtice had its free and clear current, without any denial; Neither,

2. Secondly, was there any delay of Juſtice, *there were Deputies*: *Abſalon*'s inſinuation to the people was founded upon a defect in this caſe, 2 *Sam.* 15. 3. *See, thy matters are good and right, but there is no man deputed from the King to hear thee; O that I were made Judge in the Land*, &c. And altho' without doubt it was as ill grounded as ſome pretended *Grievances* we have found ſince nigher home, yet the cheat prevail'd ſo far in the end, as the Text ſaith, *by this ſtratagem he ſtole the hearts of the men of* Iſrael. So infectious is the breath of *Faction*, that a *David*, a Prince of Gods immediate choice, could not be free from their calumnies; nay, which is worſe, muſt ſee his own

Child

Child made the property of their Deſigns. Nevertheleſs, from hence it appears how uneaſie delays are, which have been ſince (to a Proverb) thought *worſe than denials*: neither indeed is there any thing puts a greater damp upon mens ſpirits, than to live in continual expectation of that Right, which by daily procraſtinations they find themſelves never likely to enjoy. Here again at *Epheſus* things went better; for the *Deputies*, or rather the Pro-conſuls, as the word ἀνθύπατοι ſignifies, (who were the chief Miniſters of Juſtice, ſent every year from *Rome* into their ſeveral Provinces) were now preſent there, and held their Courts of Judicature: So that a Tumult which is not at any time to be endur'd, in this Juncture ſpeaks a more than ordinary inſolence, eſpecially ſince all ſober men muſt be ſatisfy'd with ſo prudent a management as the Town-Clerk, the Regiſter, ſeems here to intimate, where Juſtice was truly blind, every thing carried with an even and impartial hand, neither *denial* nor *delay* in the Caſe, no cunning evaſions could impoſe upon the Court, nor clandeſtine combinations of the little Law-managers ſqueeſe the Pockets of their Clyents; A miſplac'd word did not put back a good Cauſe, nor any perſonal Reflection from a foul mouth'd Advocate promote a bad one; there was no toſſing of Cauſes from one Court to another, nor twenty years attendance without Equity at the laſt: but all things going off with a juſt Sentence, and quick diſpatch, we cannot but pronounce *the people happy which were in ſuch a caſe*; what St. *Paul* endeavour'd, being the only thing left to make them happier, in *having the Lord for their God*.

Pſal. 14. 4. 15.

Thus with promis'd brevity have I run over the ſeveral parts of my Text. There remains now the *Applicateon*, which, ſhould I bring it wholly to the occaſion of your

your preſent Aſſembling, would be found both appoſite and natural; for as the buſineſs is more eſpecially *matters of impleading*, ſo is the *Law open*, and *here are the Reverend Deputies*, of whoſe Candor and Integrity you have already had, and will now find the moſt ſatisfactory experience. But to avoid the nauceouſneſs of perſonal addreſſes, or commendations, and all pragmatical intermedlings with what belongs to a diſtinct profeſſion; my application ſhall relate to our more Univerſal concern, as we are men, and as we are Chriſtians, as we are ſubject to Laws, and as our well-being depends upon the due execution of thoſe Laws unto which we are Subject; To this purpoſe I ſhall crave leave to raiſe two or three Inferences from what hath been already diſcours'd, and ſo put an end to any further exerciſe of your Patience.

1. Firſt, Then the *1ſt. thing I infer, is the great difference between the temper of primitive Chriſtianity, and that of our Religious pretenders in theſe later Ages:* For doubtleſs could *Demetrius* have promiſed himſelf any advantage from the Law, he would never have taken ſo illegal a courſe; Nay the Town-clerk, in the precedent *verſe*, wholly acquits St. *Paul* and his Companions, from *Blaſpheming their Goddeſs* (although we may well believe they ſufficiently abhor'd that Helliſh Idolatry) or any other rude deportment, which might give occaſion of offence to men of ſence and civility. A commiſſion indeed they had received from the King of Heaven, and it concern'd them to be exact in the execution thereof; But then his inſtructions as to the manner were as carefully to be obſerv'd, which confin'd them to ſtrength of Argument, and allegations of Scripture; with Modeſty of Behaviour, Meekneſs, and Charity,

Charity, to repreſent thoſe errours under which the World then lay, *aſſert the Truth, convert misbelievers, and, in a word, bring them all to the knowledge of the only true God:* This was the method they took; Theſe were the weapons which ſubdu'd Kingdoms, made the Croſs of Chriſt the *Romans* Standard, and his Goſpel the joy of the whole Earth: There was no *oppoſing Magiſtracy*, no *fighting the Lord's Battle againſt Carnal Powers*, no *Holy Leagues*, no *Covenants*, nor *Aſſociations*; Theſe are the ſpurious Doctrines and Practices of our modern Pretenders, who have fought for Religion till 'tis almoſt baniſh'd *Chriſtendom*, and made their many zealous undertakings but one continued *Myſtery of Iniquity*.

2. Secondly. The ſecond thing I infer, is, the opinion which all ſober Heathens had of *Tumultuous Aſſemblies*, aud *Riotous Reformations*; common obſervation inform'd them, that if it comes to a *hanc populus*, if the people may alter the Goverment, as the Painter once for a tryal let them do his Picture, it will prove ſuch a Monſter at laſt, as every wiſe man with reaſon may be afrighted at. Affairs were ſome time at this paſs in the *Jewiſh* State, *Judges* 17. 6. *In thoſe days there was no King in* Iſrael, *but every man did that which was right in his own eyes*, Yet, as the conſequent thereof, the Spirit of God records a number of ſuch hainous Enormities, and groſs Violations, as are ſcarce to be parallell'd in any Hiſtory, Sacred or Prophane. And a wiſe *Roman* reflecting upon the like Practices in his own time, lays down this as an experienced Truth, *It was better to live where Nothing, than where All things were lawful.* And, as was partly obſerved before, what have not we ſeen, nay felt, from the extravagant heats of ſuch popular deluſions! and how are we daily threatned

with

with Arrows from the ſame Quiver, the continu'd Alarms of an unquiet Generation, whom as too ſad experience teſtifies, no kindneſs could ever oblige, nor any condeſcention ſatisfy. It ſeems ſo ſtrange a fatality hangs over ſome mens heads, or rather about their Necks, that having more than once eſcap'd their due reward, by a too much abus'd Indemnity; they ſtill continue to run willfully into the ſame nooſe, and even force Authority to do them reaſon at laſt.

Nay, further our condition was for ſome time the more deſperate, becauſe our very *Repreſentatives*, as they made themſelves, which ſhould have quench'd the fire, blew the coals, by a ſtrange *Hyſteron proteron* of Policy, would preſerve the Government, by countenancing none but thoſe that acted againſt the eſtabliſh'd Laws, ſuppreſs Popery by ſetting up an Inquiſition of their own, and prevent Arbitrary Proceedings by making all honeſt men their Slaves. Now, what is this, but for our Phyſicians to become our Diſeaſe? they that ſhould preſerve the *juſt rights* of a well order'd State, underſtood ſo little to hold the Rains, that had they continu'd much longer in the Seat, *Jove* himſelf could not have repair'd the ruines ſo dreadful a conflagration would have made. *Inter utrumq; tene* was part of *Apollo's* advice to the raſh Youth; and whoever thinks to preſerve peace, by letting every man have his humour, or ſuppreſs the growth of a ſuperſtitious Worſhip by a licentious freedom, will find each Family in a State of War, and to prevent a bad Religion, have none at all.

Thirdly, My third and laſt Inference is, *That nothing preſerves the Peace and welfare of mankind, ſo much as a regular obedience unto Laws, and a due execution of*

 them

them, upon ſuch as will not yield obedience: Which St. *Peter* makes the two main branches of every Magiſtrates Duty, and for the greater encouragement, aſſures them of a Divine Commiſſion, being ſent from God for the *puniſhment of evil-doers* on the one ſide, and *praiſe of them that do well on the other*, 1 Pet. 2. 14. *Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power, do that which is good, otherwiſe it bears not the Sword in vain*: And 'tis not only a great, but dangerous miſtake of ſome men, to think that Laws and Liberty are inconſiſtent.

Ro. 13. 3.

Fallitur, egregio quiſquis ſub Principe credit
Servitium, nunquam libertas gratior extat, &c.

True freedom never appears ſo graceful as when it underſtands its duty, regularly moves in its proper ſphere as providence and Authority hath order'd. But for ſome to diſpute whether they ſhall obey or not, and others diſpute whether they ſhall not let them alone, is to ſuffer the Ship both of Church and State to drive at the mercy of wind and Tide, whilſt neither *Pilot* nor *Mariners* attend their buſineſs. 'Tis what the Spirit of God ſeverely reflects upon in a *Heathen* Magiſtrate, and therefore ſtrange if we have any *Gallios* under the *Chriſtian* Oeconomy, who can ſee the groſſeſt violations before their eyes, and yet *care for none of theſe things*: Whereas, to reſume our former metaphor, of this we muſt needs be convinc'd, that 'tis more reaſonable to expect our ſafety from an unanimous endeavour to keep the Veſſel above water, then the fond hopes of an eſcape when ever ſhe comes to ſink: And withall, there is this great inducement to quicken us, for if they who once had us under Hatches, (whether *Papiſt* or *Puritan*,) get us the ſecond time into their power, we can expect nothing leſs then the

Act. 18. 17.

the utmoſt extremity, their little Finger (were it poſſible,) ſhould prove heavier than their Loins before; To be ſure inſtead of Rods, they would be all Scorpion: And yet how ſoon this may be, God of his infinite wiſdom only knows; But doubtleſs it cannot be too much our endevour under his Bleſſing to prevent; which for the cloſe of all, I am ſure there are none here preſent, but one way or other are qualified to do, ſome by their Power, others by their perſwaſion, but all by their Prayers, unfeignedly imploring that great and good God, who is a God of Order, to diſcountenance confuſion, to ſet bounds to mens *Paſſions* by *Reaſon*, to *Error* by *Truth*, to *Sedition* by *Laws*, to *Schiſme* by *Charity*; and ſo fix us upon thoſe laſting Pillars of *Purity* and *Truth*, that being all of one heart, and one mind, we may make it our joynt endeavour to propagate the Goſpel of his Son, and ſerve him in the *unity of the Spirit*, and *the bond of Peace*. Eph. 4. 3.

FINIS.